

**Linda Clair**  
**Meditation Retreat**  
**Kallara Conference Centre, Australia – March 2020**  
**Transcription from Audio Recordings**

**FILE 1A – Saturday afternoon guided meditation**

Linda: Welcome everyone. For the next seven days you really have no idea what's going to happen – nobody does. You might think you do and you might think you know how you want to feel, what you *want* to happen, but really you've got no idea and no control over it. This isn't about controlling anything. This is about seeing how much control your mind has over you, and becoming bit by bit free from that control.

So you don't break free from control by controlling something else. This is all about the body, your body – becoming more and more grounded in your body so you can see more clearly the workings of the mind and how much it does control everything you do, everything you feel, think, your actions. And you're here because you want to be free from that control.

But the thought of freedom can be scary because freedom is a place of no thought, no thinking. And for most people thinking is your security, the known is your security, going over and over your own personal past again and again and again is your security. But of course there is no security in the known, there is no security in thinking. You can't think your way out of anything; you can't resolve a problem by thinking about it. You think you can but really it's all just a theory, and this is about practice. So to really become free from your mind, in my experience, you need a practice. Something you can use to feel more stable in as the mind starts to break down, and as I said this practice is all about the body, becoming more grounded in your body. And at the end of this seven-days you will feel so much more grounded than you do right now. And that to me is exciting. So try not to fear the unknown.

So take a few deep breaths into the belly and feel your body. Don't visualise – this isn't about visualising. It's about using the sensations in your body to keep reaffirming that, "This is where I am right now, sitting here in this room." And take your attention to the top of your head. Keep breathing into the belly and feel the sensation on the top of your head however it feels right now. Not how you'd like it to feel, how you think it should feel, just try and feel the direct sensation without judging it as good or bad or right or wrong. Feel the sensation of your eyelids on your eyes. Feel your breath going through your nostrils, your mouth, your lips, your jaw and your chin. And keep breathing into the belly, using your breath as an anchor – not as an escape or even a focus, but an anchor.

Feel your shoulders – so even if you feel tension in your shoulders, or anywhere else in your body – when you feel this tension try and stay still with it. Go to your left shoulder and go down your arm to your left elbow and feel your elbow. Then go down to your left hand and feel your hand, and feel your thumb and each finger. And keep breathing deeply into the belly. Take your attention to your right shoulder and feel your shoulder, and go down your arm to your right elbow. Then down to your right hand and feel your hand, and feel your thumb and each finger. Feel both arms and both hands. Try and feel the sensation *in* your body. Then take your attention to your chest and as you

breathe in and out, and it's good to breathe in and out through the nose, feel the gentle movement of your chest with the breath. Then go down to the abdomen. This is the place that many people avoid, but this is the place you really need to keep going back to – this is your home base, your anchor, your earth. It's a very tangible place to feel the breath, to be with your breath. You can feel it rising and falling as your body is breathing. And it's not your mind breathing; it's not your mind telling your body to breathe. Your body is perfectly capable of breathing without you thinking about it, controlling it.

Feel your thighs, your left knee and your right knee, your left foot and your right foot. Feel your spine from the top of the spine down your back to the bottom of the spine. So try and keep your spine straight without being rigid, straight and flexible.

Then again feel your whole body. You're here. In fact, wherever your body is, you're in it, you are. You're not your body, in truth, but your body is really the closest thing to reality that you have in this existence. It's much more real than any thought you've ever had, much more tangible.

So this practice is very simple. Not easy but simple. Each time you realise you haven't been in your body – which is what thinking is, thinking is an out of body experience – each time you realise you've been lost in thinking bring your attention back to the breath in the abdomen, the rise and the fall of the abdomen with the breath. So this of course sounds simple, and it is simple, but your mind is going to resist you doing this every step of the way. And sometimes it will take a super-human effort to break away from a train of thought and come back to where you really are, which is here now.

Every thought you have is of something you have already experienced. You can't have a thought of the unknown. You can only project your past experiences onto an imaginary future, and as long as you keep doing that you're never really going to be here. You'll never realise what reality is, you'll never realise true peace, contentment, acceptance, freedom.

So every time I begin a retreat I feel excited. I just love doing this, I love being with people becoming freer and freer, and being prepared to work for this freedom. Because you do have to work, it does take effort, a lot of effort. But the peace that it's possible to feel is indescribable. It puts every experience that you've ever had into the shadows. So everyone is capable of this. Anyone who really wants this is capable of this. It's not restricted to a special few. So during the next seven days I encourage you to put everything into this, everything you possibly can. Don't think that this is for someone else – this can be for you. This can happen in you.

So, as N. was saying, keep it silent this week. Use this silence to keep looking into you, your reactions, your judgements. You'll see things that you don't like. It's not about loving yourself, it's about loving something *other* than yourself, putting *this* first. And you are doing this because you love this, there is something in you that longs for this. So whatever you're doing – whether you're sitting, walking, eating – be in your body.